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Thank you Mr. Chairman. I appreciate being asked here to address this important issue, and I want to thank you and other members of the committee for your consistent leadership on protecting our children from sex and violence.

It has been chilling to read about, and to hear again from Commissioner Pitofsky, the FTC's findings which reveal how methodically companies target adult entertainment products at young people. I know that this report will be well read, not just in Washington DC, but by parents who are concerned about this issue.

This FTC report reiterates what many of us have been saying for a long time: that some in the entertainment industry are consistently failing to act responsibly. They are producing violent, sexually-explicit material, and they are peddling it to children. They claim unbridled license to do so under the First Amendment; however, their persistent irresponsibility, ironically, threatens the First Amendment as their product is so objectionable that more and more good citizens find appealing the idea that government regulation should remove entertainment industry products from the public square. Let me say from the outset that I am opposed to such regulation.

I want to focus on the larger picture for a moment. When I served as Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities I often testified before this august body about what Matthew Arnold called "the best that has been thought and known in the world," the history and philosophy and literature that lifts our souls and helps us understand our experience. I've talked about the importance of providing children with models of honesty and honor, of telling them stories of Abe Lincoln and Harriet Tubman so they can understand the beauty and dignity of a life lived according to high ideals.

My friend Peggy Noonan, who is a wonderful writer, suggests that we understand the way our children are affected by such uplifting stories—as well as by stories that demean and degrade—by imagining little children as intelligent fish swimming in a deep ocean. The stories are "waves of sight and sound, of thought and fact [that] come invisibly through the water, like radar; they go through [our children] again and again, from this direction and that." The waves come from books and movies, from music and television, and more and more they are about sex and violence, about hate and degradation. Noonan writes:

We forget, those of us who are middle-aged, that we grew up in a time of saner images and

sounds. For instance, the culture of crime only began to explode in the sixties. We have lived in it for thirty years, and most of us turned out okay. So we think our children will be all right, too. But they never had a normal culture against which to balance the newer, sicker one. They have no reference points to the old boring normality. We assume they know what we know: "This is not right." But why would they know that? The water in which they swim is the only water they have ever known.

Cleaning up the water, the ocean our children are swimming in, is, Noonan writes, the most important environmental issue of our time.

But where to begin? For years now, we have talked about this problem at a high level. With this latest outrage, it seems to me the time has come to get very specific, to name names, to say exactly what is wrong, and to ask individuals to be accountable. So here is a name: Marshall Mathers, the rapper otherwise known as Eminem. And here is exactly what is wrong—or at least one among many things objectionable about his lyrics—he promotes violence of the most degrading kind against women. In "Kill You," a song from his album "The Marshall Mathers LP," he begins by describing the satisfaction of raping and murdering his mother and then goes on to imagine the joys of murdering any woman he might come across. "Wives, nuns, sluts," whoever "the bitches" might be, he will kill them slowly, leaving enough air in their lungs so their screaming will be prolonged. He will paint the forest with their blood. "I got the machete from O.J.," he shouts, "Bitch, I'm a kill you."

Eminem is not the first rapper to revel in violent misogyny, but he has taken hatred of women and depictions of degrading and violating them to such lengths that I have written to Michele Hooper and Marie-Josée Kravis, the two female members of the board of Seagram, whose company, Interscope, produces and distributes Eminem. I have asked Hooper and Kravis to ask their fellow board members how it is possible to reconcile corporate responsibility with the distribution of lyrics that are socially irresponsible. "I fully understand your duty to shareholders," I wrote to them, "but can that duty be defined in purely economic terms? Aren't many of your shareholders women, who are demeaned by some of the music you distribute? Aren't many of them parents, who shudder at the debased and violent culture that Seagram is helping create?"

I noted in my letters that the time has long passed when we can shrug off violence in the entertainment industry by saying that it has no effect, by saying it's just coincidence that Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, the murderers of Columbine High, were fans of the shock rocker, Marilyn Manson, also distributed by Seagram. It is no longer credible to suggest that young people aren't affected by music, films, and video games that celebrate violence. The entertainment industry, when it claims this, sounds exactly like the tobacco industry of a few years ago when its leaders kept insisting that you couldn't really say that cigarettes cause cancer.

Which brings us back to the shareholders of Seagram. Is it in their best interest for Seagram

To pursue a course that may well lead to federal regulation? Let me reiterate that I am opposed to such regulation. I have long been a vocal supporter of free speech, and it is hard to imagine a law to regulate the entertainment industry that would not run afoul of the first amendment. But we have arrived at a situation where the entertainment industry is causing such outrage that regulation is being seriously proposed.

At a minimum, I have suggested to Michele Hooper and Marie-Josée Kravis that Seagram ought to work with others in the music industry to give the current rating system more meaning by providing reasons for advisory labels, and specifying ages. This last would make it easier to recognize when music was being marketed inappropriately, which is a first step if the industry if the industry is to regulate this matter itself. Age-labeling would also give retailers information they need in order to decide who should be able to buy certain materials and who should not. As the FTC report makes clear, there is confusion on this point now. While some music outlets let anyone buy anything, others do try to impose standards, but in one instance the standard will be that no one under seventeen can buy an advisory-labeled CD. In another, no one under thirteen.

I also suggest that the industry require that music deemed suitable only for those over seventeen include the lyrics so that parents can review them and know what their children are listening to.

Mr. Chairman, as I am sure you and other members of this committee know, Seagram is hardly the only culprit. That company may produce and distribute Eminem, but the entire music industry reveres him. Last week, he received three MTV music awards, including best male artist. It is truly astonishing to me that a man whose work is so filled with hate would be so honored by his peers.

We are faced with a problem that stretches across the entire entertainment industry, including movies and video games as well as music. But the time has come, I think, to quit issuing blanket denouncements, to zero in with a bill of particulars, and to hope that individuals will step up and assume responsibility.

I thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify today.